



*Black & Pink*



a family of  
LGBTQ  
prisoners and  
"free world"  
LGBTQA allies  
who support  
each other

## February 2012 Newsletter

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This issue of Black & Pink  
Newsletter was sponsored by  
donor Naomi Sobel!

Dear Friends,

*Black & Pink* has been consistently distributing this monthly newsletter for two years!!! Last year we were sending out 650 newsletters, now we are sending out 1300. While we celebrate our growing reach, our goal is not simply to grow *Black & Pink* but to see the end of the penal system that makes our existence necessary. We mark successful growth by recommitting ourselves to the abolition of the prison industrial complex that keeps so many of our LGBTQ family locked behind bars, indefinitely registered with the state, tracked by parole officers, hassled by the police, and forced into underground economies.

This February is also Black History Month. Anytime anyone talks about the United States prison system it is essential that we talk openly about race. The current prison system has been referred to as "The New Jim Crow" by Michelle Alexander. The abolitionist movement takes our language from the struggle to abolish chattel slavery of Black people in the United States. Regardless of our own racial identities, we strengthen ourselves by understanding the legacies of survival and resistance by Black communities' fight against racism and white supremacy.

Cathy Cohen, radical professor and Black lesbian organizer in New York City, wrote an excellent article, "*Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens: The Radical Potential of Queer Politics?*". This article is an example of exactly why relevant queer movements, like ours, are required to have a complex understanding of race. Cohen writes, "*I want to be clear here that what I am calling for is the destabilization and not the destruction of identity categories. We must reject a queer politics that seems to ignore in its analysis of the usefulness of traditionally named categories the role of identity and community as paths to survival, using shared experiences of oppression and resistance to build indigenous resources, shape consciousness, and act collectively. Instead, I would suggest that it is the multiplicity and interconnectedness of our identities that provide the most promising avenue for the destabilization and radical politicalization of these same categories.*" Dr. Cohen reminds us that we must be willing to vision our identities as incarcerated queers, formerly incarcerated fags/dykes/queens, revolutionary same-gender loving men of color as key parts of a movement that is rooted in our experiences of violence and survival. It is the incarcerated members of the *Black & Pink* family who can most truly speak to the impact of the prison industrial complex on our communities. We on the outside have the responsibility to *listen* and *act* according to your direction. This is one of the reasons we have an incarcerated leadership circle.

Certainly having one month to recognize the history of Black folks is not a viable solution to ending systemic violence against people of color. However, this month is a community-sanctioned time for people of all ethnicities to listen and take part in actions of solidarity as Black folks intentionally relay their stories, dreams, and agendas. **ALL** of the most successful prisoner-led movements in the United States have had Black leadership at the helm, with white prisoners understanding the ways the prison system uses racism to divide the movements. We know that you have stories about the ways in which race and/or sexuality imprints your resistance/ struggle behind the bars. Write them. Send them. Share them because speaking truth to our own histories will strengthen our collective. It will increase our power. Educating each other around race, sexuality, economics, gender and liberation will help dismantle the prison industrial complex and put us in a better position to live in harmony when it finally falls.

In loving solidarity,  
Jason





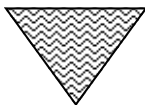
## CORRESPONDENCE

*Hi,*

I go by Wayne, a short version of my name. I'm 27 years old and have 50 to life for Second Degree Murder. But first I like to say I'm not a killer or anything like it. I'm a very nice person, but where I am we have 6 Seg units, 3 Protective Units, and only 3 General Population (GP). This is supposed to be a super max prison and there is not much violence, thank God. But as of about 2 years ago, a lot of inmates are attacking officers and carrying knives and this prison does not know exactly how to handle inmates so rules are getting worse. Anyway, I'm Bisexual, I've been this way all my life, and being in a prison where it is not tolerated and same sex marriage is against the law, I only know 2 inmates out of 200 something inmates are like me. There is a lot of white gangs, supremacists, here. I am white but I ain't like that. My child is Latino and White, I love her so much. Her Mom only writes 2 times a year, and I have no friends here. I live in Seg, I am a Max inmate, but on the GP pods here I would be severely beaten or killed so I will spend my whole life in Seg unless I can get a transfer. Anyway, Black & Pink I love these people and all of you out there fighting for us in prison, and all of you in prison, keep your head held high, OK, we still have hope and always God is here for all of us, I pray every night for everyone. It will change, the way people are towards us, especially the way people of color are treated. People hate me just because I have a mixed race child. They can go to hell. But I love all of you white, purple, green, blue, black, who cares. We are all people and have hearts and are God's children. Well, 'till pen meets paper, God loves you and so do I!

Your Friend,

Wayne, Wyoming



### ***To All My Black & Pink Family,***

I appreciate all the words of advice that is shared every month for our upliftment. We know that the Prison-Industrial Complex is never going to institute any real programs or structure for our rehabilitation. The bulk of their financing comes from the numbers of prisoners in the system so lawyers, congressional members and judges in each state establish relations to keep the prisons full. Therefore we need to look out for ourselves when it comes to breaking the chains of prison recidivism.

First, focus on getting educated. If you don't have a GED, get one! You can forgo hanging out in the yard talking mess and focus on what can help you upon your release. A GED ain't much but it's better than having none. Start associating with people who are business minded or have positive things to talk about. This creates an attitude of success within your own consciousness and push you in that direction. Why re-live past criminal war stories when that is what gets us in this hell-hole in the first place?

Visit the General Library and leave the hood novels on the shelf and pick up business books. Read magazines like Entrepreneur, Forbes, Fortune, Small Business, etc. Expand your mind to ways to make money legally. It's not a quick thing to be sure and requires a lot of patience but think how many years most of us have spent in prison. If the same time and energy would have been directed out there to starting a business think of where we'd be now.

Write LBGTQ organizations and ask for advice on these topics. You'll be surprised how much assistance will come your way when you travel on a pathway of growth and development. You have already taken a step in that direction by just reading this newsletter.

Now I know there are some who have sentences that will never let them see the streets again but we can all contribute to stopping the influx of prisoners coming back after they get out. Pull someone up. Point them in the right direction. Tell him/her you don't want them to end up with that kind of time. All in all we need to look out for one another just like other "groups" do.

One Love,

Robert C., New York



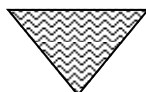
### ***Hey There Black & Pink,***

Life goes on just the same as always here with me. I tell people all the time that "I have reached a state of being where I'm always happy regardless of my circumstances," yes, this includes being locked down like a zoo animal, kept away from my family and loved ones, treated with a level of scorn and hatred for my sexuality, deprived of sincere companionship. I'm above being "brought down" by this place because I realize that it's all "external stimulus." The source of happiness is from within ourselves. The trick is finding that place within some have different ways of doing this, like prayer, meditation, or visualization. Whatever works for you. Either way it takes practice to make it effective. I try to be a good example for this, but the view of me is obscured by the bigoted opinion of my sexuality. Sexuality, to me, is not a defining characteristic for someone. It does not matter to me who you want to sleep with. To cut someone off because of their preference is barbaric and frankly stupid. I don't introduce myself by saying, "Hey, how ya doin'- I'm bi, just so you know." And I don't act out of character on purpose to attract anyone's attention (although I do like to role-play with my lover, when I have one that is). To me it's just who I am and not something that should be made a drama about. In prison it's such a f\*\*\*ing issue because of the homophobic atmosphere. It's a weakness to be gay, or bi. You have to maintain this machismo.

I'm tired of it really. I'll be going back to General Population next month. I'll most likely be going to a new place where no one will know me. I won't pretend to be any other way than I am. But I won't make myself a display either. If it comes up- oh well, it is what it is. If you don't want to associate with me after finding out, move along, I don't have time for close-minded idiots. If you're cool with it- that's a step towards friendship. I've been alone for quite some time. My friends and loved ones are all in my head and heart. So I'm still happy. To be alive and aware of the universe and the world. With all of its mysteries, quandaries, vagaries, ecstasies. Quite interesting times we're in. If only people would open their minds to new experiences and perspectives. Life doesn't have to suck. Even in here I find ways to be creative and spontaneous. That's what lead me to Black & Pink in the first place. It must be weird out in the free world. You're at a disadvantage because you have to spend time and effort on the cheese-chase of the established reality tunnel machine, a maze made to lose. And most of the population would not survive without the "system." We're all dependent. The world is as we see it- filtered through our subconsciously accumulated perceptions that structure our awareness without our knowledge. We all believe whatever we want, but no one has the info appropriate enough to make any approximation of the truth- It's beyond any one person. So why not engage one's self in reprogramming to be happy and content- lividly enthusiastic no matter our physical circumstances? Nothing has the power- aside from obvious physical extremes- to affect us.

One Love,

Jeremy aka Ceri, Texas



### ***Need Help in Texas***

I need some help. It may seem like such a small problem compared to other abuses brought about by the US prison complex. I've been denied certain medications or told that those meds were dispensed when in fact they weren't. So when I filed a grievance and asked them to check the only other man on the unit with my name and see if he was given the meds by mistake, the medical department had a fit. However, I was taken by the Sargent over to the other wing and we did check. Guess what? The other guy had my meds. The security staff just shook their heads and said "file a grievance." Not their problem. I received the meds now, but the verbal abuse coming from the pill lady is putting me at risk of harm for her comments. Here's one: "If you'd have kept those dicks out of your ass, you wouldn't need this medicine." So I filed again on this. Now they deducted \$100 from my trust account for a medical appointment I never went to. That money I receive once a year at this time from my family. This is theft of some sort. Security can't do anything. My family won't get involved because of the harassment you get for calling up here on behalf of a loved one. I even had the Disciplinary Capt tell me that I wouldn't be sitting in front of him if my claim didn't have merit. This surprised the crap out of me. He gave me a phone #, a family hotline # and a name, but told me to burn the number up.

Well, I want to light a match. The Texas medical system has been told they are borderline breaking the laws due to contract disputes. Family with a loved one being made to suffer can call this family hotline: 936-437-4271, the TDCJ Healthcare Division, ask for Ms. Pipkin. Good luck to everyone. I just want the verbal abuse to stop and my \$100 back. I know, minuscule compared to what most go through here in TDC. I just got out of Seg from 11 years, so I do know the abuse that happens.

Please stay safe and have a beautiful New Year, if possible.

Love,

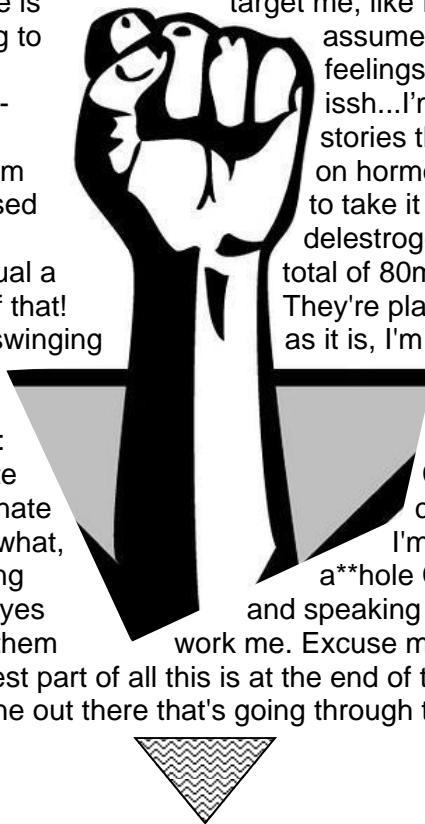
Billy, Texas



**Haay, I'm Reginald aka Mrs. ReeRee,**

Uhhm, there's something that bothers me! I am a transgender locked up in Nevada. It's my first time in prison and tell me why dang near the whole yard is fighting about me!! They're jealous because I've found a husband, he loves me and I love him. But for some reason everybody has their Pinocchio nose in our business! Running around here in this prison eating and feeding lies about me and my husband. Get a load of this: Even the C.O.'s are haters, especially the female officers...They're so jealous and they discriminate against me for being transgendered! Secretly the C.O.'s here are trying to split me and my husband up by giving us an mj30, which is sexual stimulation, but we haven't even got the chance to do anything yet because of the simple fact that people are always up in our "George Foreman"... They're lying and trying to cross us out by putting us in the hole! Hahaha! In their faces, suckas, go ahead. They can put us in the hole, we'll never lose contact with each other. I am in touch with all his immediate family, yes!, they love me by the way. I am transgender and I feel like my name should be TT instead of ReeRee, TT would stand for Tranny Target, because that's all they do in here is target me, like I'm doing something wrong. Umm...excuse me, but these people keep trying to assume too much about me and my relationship. But they don't know we have real feelings involved! Any I'm getting all these write-ups for basically he-say she-say bull-iss...I'm tired! I'm sick 'n tired of being sick 'n tired of these lies and false made-up stories these inmates keep spilling, Hell the C.O.'s too. OMG, now they know that I'm on hormones, I take spironolactone, which is a testosterone blocker. I'm supposed to take it 2 times a day or 100mg a day, instead they give me 50mg a day! As for my delestrogen, I'm supposed to take it two times a month! 40mg is supposed to equal a total of 80mg a month...so tell me why they only given me my estrogen once a month if that hazard! They're playing with my hormones, this is such a health as it is, I'm bipolar, schizo-affective, anxious, depressed... and they got the nerve to play with my hormones. OK, they want to play dirty? Then let's play. I'm going to sue them for everything they're put me through, which is: Emotional distress, False preclaim, Discrimination, Bias Act aka Hate Crimes. Yes sweetie, we have our own new transgender hate crime law now, and trust me I'm going to take major advantage of it! Ya know what, I'm even going to add Sexual Harassment in my lawsuit, because these hating a\*\*hole C.Os stare me down, I feel uncomfortable at them undressing me with their eyes and speaking ill-mannered to me..... And I'm so going to work this prison system, not let them work me. Excuse me prison, but I demand my hormones please?? Now what? And the best part of all this is at the end of the day, I'm still with my husband, something these people can't stand! Anyone out there that's going through this freaking horsehag too?

-Mrs. ReeRee, Nevada



**Stop LGBTQ Suicide!!**

Hey Black & Pink family- As some of us might know, we've lost another loved one. Jamey Rodemeyer, 14. He asked for help, no one gave him help.

One of the bullies posted a blog about him in all capital letters: "JAMIE IS STUPID, GAY, FAT, AND UGLY. HE MUST DIE!" One of his friends told him, "Don't listen to cowards on here Jamey."

Nothing is being done to those bullying LGBTQ individuals. I feel the ones who were bullying Jamey should have some type of punishment. We have to get the Governors to enforce hate crime punishments! That should not be "suicide," it should be "MANSLAUGHTER" because he was mentally murdered before he committed suicide.

On Sept 17, 2011, Jamey posted a lyric from Lady Gaga's song "The Queen" on his Facebook page: "Don't forget me when I come crying to heaven's door." Sept. 8 Jamey wrote his request for someone to help. He wrote: "No one in my school cares about preventing suicide, while you're the ones calling me [gay slur] and tearing me down."

This was a family member who didn't know how to verbally ask for help. He wanted help but he didn't know how to ask for it. On Sept 9, he wrote: "I always say how bullied I am but no one listens to me." He finished by saying that "What do I have to do so people will listen to me?" All of Jamey's blogs were pleas for help. We need to stop our families from doing what Jamey and many other have done.

R.I.P. Jamey Rodemeyer. We love you.

-Shaylanna, New York





## **Gay-straight alliances help LGBT youth, young adults** By Dana Rudolph 11/18/2011

Gay-straight alliance clubs in middle schools and high schools help youth not only while they are in school, but also later in life, according to a new study published in the journal *Applied Developmental Science*.

LGBT young adults who attended a school with a GSA had better mental health as young adults, were less likely to drop out of high school, and more likely to attend college. "This study adds to the mounting evidence that youth-led clubs are important for healthy development—especially for youth at risk," Russell B. Toomey—one of the 4 researchers—said in a statement. "For LGBT youth, high school gay-straight alliances make a significant positive difference."

The study the first to look at the impact of GSAs on students as they grow into young adults. The research is part of Ryan's Family Acceptance Project at SF State University. The study covered 245 young adults (ages 21-25) in the San Francisco Bay Area who self-identified as LGBT and came from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. Approximately 47% identified as male, 45% as female, and 9% as transgender. Approximately 70% identified as lesbian or gay, 13% as bisexual, and 17% as other (queer, dyke, homosexual). About half (51%) were Latino and half (49%) were white and non-Latino.

The presence of a GSA at the school was more relevant to students' well-being than their actual participation in it. The researchers suggest this may be because "schools with GSAs likely have safer school climates overall." Participants who perceived their GSAs to be more effective in promoting safe school climates reported lower levels of LGBT-specific school victimization. Participation in a GSA did seem to buffer the impact of school victimization related to being LGBT. Students who experienced victimization at a low level and participated in a GSA had lower levels of depression as young adults and fewer lifetime suicide attempts. But students who experienced higher levels of victimization did not enjoy the same protective effect of having a GSA at their school. "Our findings," said Toomey, "document that other LGBT-positive supports need to be implemented in schools for LGBT students to thrive."

Earlier studies have shown the positive effects of GSAs on students. In the May 2011 issue of *Pediatrics*, Dr. Mark Hatzenbuehler found a positive social environment, including the presence of GSAs, led to a 20% reduction in the risk of attempting suicide for LGBT youth. According to GLSEN's 2009 National School Climate Survey, LGBT students in schools with GSAs experienced less victimization related to their sexual orientation and gender expression, and felt a greater sense of connectedness to their school community.

There are over 4,000 GSAs in the U.S., and nearly 45% of LGBT students attend a school that has one. Many schools still try to prohibit GSAs. In recent years, Okeechobee and Yulee high schools in Florida, Flour Bluff High School in Corpus Christi, Texas, and West Bend High School in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, have attempted to bar GSAs. Federal lawsuits were brought against the schools in Florida and Wisconsin, and the ACLU sent a notice letter to the school in Texas, reminding them of their legal obligation to allow the groups. In all of the cases, the parties settled out of court or judges ruled in favor of allowing the GSA. ( For full article: <http://www.keennewsservice.com/2011/11/18/gay-straight-alliances-help>)



## **Which HIV Finding is the Health Breakthrough of 2011?**

By Neal Broverman

This year has seen monumental advances in HIV treatment and prevention, but some health experts say the most important advance is the discovery that antiretroviral treatment cuts down infection rates by more than 95%.

It's been known since the 1990s that antiretroviral medications save lives of those with HIV. But the results of recently-published studies show HIV-positive people on proper treatment have a very small chance of infecting HIV-negative partners. The findings show that AIDS can be nearly wiped out if everyone who needs antiretroviral medication receives it and takes it as prescribed, writes Art Caplan, the director for the Center for Bioethics at the University of Pennsylvania, on MSNBC's Vitals page.

"A clinical trial involving AIDS this year is rightly being called by *Science* magazine the most important scientific breakthrough of the year," Caplan writes. "So, at last, after taking a terrible toll on us for decades, we now know how to get the HIV virus on the run. Get antiretroviral medications to all 7.6 million people who need them, continue aggressive efforts to promote the use of condoms and the avoidance of risky sexual and injection drug behavior, give out clean needles to addicts and we can have our revenge on the virus that causes AIDS."





## Gay Activist David Kato's Murderer Gets 30 Years

The Associated Press is reporting that a Ugandan court has sentenced Sidney Nsubuga Enoch, 22 -- who admitted that he bludgeoned gay activist David Kato to death with a hammer in January -- to 30 years in prison. Kato's slaying came only months after his picture was published in an anti-gay newspaper next to the words "Hang Them." Enoch said he was provoked by sexual advances that Kato made toward him. Gay-rights activists have blamed an increase in homophobia in Uganda on evangelical preachers. In May the Ugandan Parliament adjourned without discussing a controversial bill that proposed the death penalty for some homosexual acts. Let's get this straight, pun intended: If you murder someone in cold blood, you get 30 years; if you engage in a "homosexual act," you get the death penalty. Yeah, that makes sense. Not! Any way you frame it, that math does not add up.



### *A Sister Outsider in "Pariah" By Rev. Irene Monroe 1/11/2012*

Seldom do I see my image anywhere, especially portrayed in non-stereotypical and non-heterosexist ways on the silver screen. As a matter of fact, if you Google "black lesbians" or "black lesbians in film" you'll get a plethora of porn sites to visit. But writer-director Dee Rees's semi-autobiographical coming-of-age drama **Pariah** gives me a glimpse of my younger self-growing up in Brooklyn.

**Pariah** is about Alike (ah-LEE-kay), a virginal 17-year-old African American lesbian high school student living in the Fort Greene section of Brooklyn who doesn't know how to come out to her parents, who's eager to have her first sexual experience, and who's not sure of the type of butch lesbian she wants to be — "soft stud," one of the "Aggressive Lesbians" — a subculture of young butch lesbians who adopt a gangster hip-hop persona to compete for femme women — or something totally different. Alike knows that she loves women; that's not the question. The question is "how to be," Rees told the Boston Globe. "And so, in my own struggle, a large part of my question was how to be in the world."

One of the ways of defining how to be in the world, especially for high schoolers, is through clothes. But with a mother — Audrey (Kim Wayans) — who demonstrates zero tolerance for her daughter's non-gender-conforming ways, especially exhibited by Alike's taste for non-frilly femme attire, we see Alike forced to be a gender chameleon — changing into her butch togs going to school and out of them going home. **Pariah** wouldn't be an authentic black coming-out tale if religious homophobia didn't show its countenance on someone. And Audrey is that person. With the hopes of her shy tomboyish daughter blossoming into a more socially friendly and feminine girl, Audrey convinces a churchgoer that their daughters, who are in the same class, should walk to school together for safety reasons. And not surprising to those of us of the Black Church, Alike's first sexual experience is with one of the churchgoer's daughters.

To find antecedents or self-reflections of yourself, especially in American films, is difficult, which is why **Pariah's** title and theme of portraying black lesbian life, albeit marginalized in both African American church and white LGBTQ communities, in a positive and realistic light is thoroughly refreshing. Occasionally, however, we will see present-day portrayals of black lesbians on major television channels and in major movie house across the country, but not by out black lesbians. For example, in the 2009 film **Precious**, Paula Patton plays Ms. Blu Rain, a lesbian teacher who helps Precious (Gabourey Sidibe) embrace her life's worth and her sexuality. Patton inspires Precious to learn to read, and to write, giving her a daily writing assignment that eventually leads Precious coming into her own. And with Patton understanding both the New York welfare system and the New York Public School system, she is portrayed in the film as both an intellectual and activist who's not going to let Precious fail or fall under her watch.

Another example, in 1996, we have Queen Latifah's spot-on portrayal of a butch lesbian in the movie **Set It Off**, that, of course, set off a conflagration of queries about her sexual orientation. Last summer Latifah's character on the show *Single Ladies* — which she executive produces — was accidentally outed, and worked out in a positive way for the character. Viewers and the blogosphere began to speculate that Latifah was channeling her personal life through her small-screen character.

But films written and directed by women of color that reach the major silver screen are rare, and by LGBTQ women of color, it's even rarer. The last time I saw a film written and directed by a LGBTQ woman of color that reached the level of mass distribution and international acclaim as **Pariah** was sixteen years ago. In 1996, Cheryl Dunye wrote, directed and starred in her first film — **The Watermelon Woman** — which was also the first African American lesbian feature film. Dunye's "mockumentary" is a scathing critique of the racist cinematic representation of black women. The protagonist of the film, played by Dunye, makes a film about an obscure black actress from the 1930s known for playing stereotypical "mammy" roles relegated to black actresses during that era. In this faux-cinema-verite account of a black lesbian filmmaker uncovering the hidden histories of black women live — straight and LGBTQ — controversial cultural critic Camille Paglia makes a cameo appearance informing Dunye that the Mammy archetype once represented a black goddess figure.

And unbeknownst to the general public, 20 feature films have been directed by black lesbians since Dunye's **The Watermelon Woman**. Dunye's mockumentary came out during the height of black queer cinema, from 1991 – 1996, dubbed the "Golden Age," where black lesbians films were predominately documentaries seen unfortunately by small audiences. "That was the period of time when we had the most women producing the widest variety of work. Approximately 50 percent of all work produced was made during that five-year time period. Very little work is being produced today by out black lesbian media makers. So maybe Dee Rees is part of the trend of the mainstreaming of niche content that we see happening across all media platforms," African American lesbian filmmaker Yvonne Welbon, founder and director of Sisters in Cinema, told The Root reporter Salamishah Tillet.

It's my hope that **Pariah** will be part of the trend of the mainstreaming of niche content. Black lesbian cinematic representation is long overdue.





## ART Attack!

### The Wedding

Witnessed a marriage today,  
The men even shared a kiss.  
For them it's prison happiness,  
For them this is bliss.

There won't be a honeymoon,  
Some corner they will sneak.  
The intimacy that they share,  
In prison gossip it will leak.

How long it will last,  
Nobody will ever know.  
One minute they're both together,  
The next, one has to go.

Just another aspect of prison,  
No different from the street.  
In here you're never amazed,  
By the kind of people you meet.

-Kitty, New York



Artwork by Freddie G, TX

### Silent accusation

Give us Rest, Give us time  
to sort out this mess we've made of our lives  
give us a chance to pay for our crimes  
You have our bodies, some of our minds  
what more do you want.

More pain and more fines  
take his rigid body and cut it down  
call him worthless – call him clown  
I called him friend – His mother, "son"  
Look at his face – Look what you've done  
- Brandon C.

2/12/2009 Spencer Hooper was talked into  
hanging himself by pigs. AKA, murder.



know your history! tell your stories



### **Martin Luther-Oscar Grant (Ode to Marilyn Buck)**

A dream must include enemy or friend  
or nightmares and sugar plums  
would have the same end  
Cell phones they speak louder than words  
a bullet in the back or one in the head  
a foe of this system or one in the bed  
Amerikkan equality equals a Black man dead  
The hate remains as the people wait  
The blood it runs and still we wait  
No more – never – lets do this now  
Hunger strikes, prison strikes, dead revolutionaries  
a dream, a vendetta, a beautiful wobbly woman's  
words,

“following the tradition

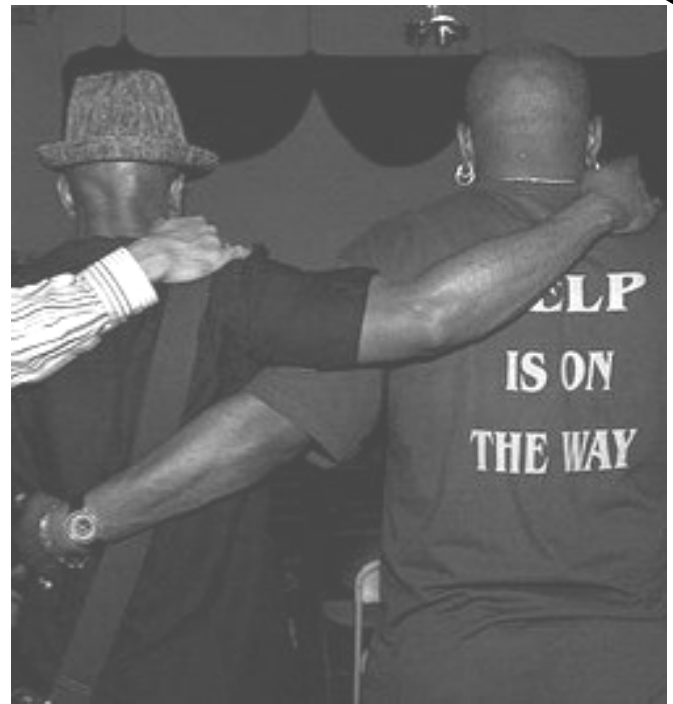
Nat Turner – John Brown

Wobblies Subversives

Resistance in the belly of the beast”

Sweetest most captivating soul I've ever heard  
ticking, ticking – it's getting close  
closer, closer – who wants it most  
the people rise up – the people take back  
mankind progresses  
two steps forward – zero back  
it's time comrades!

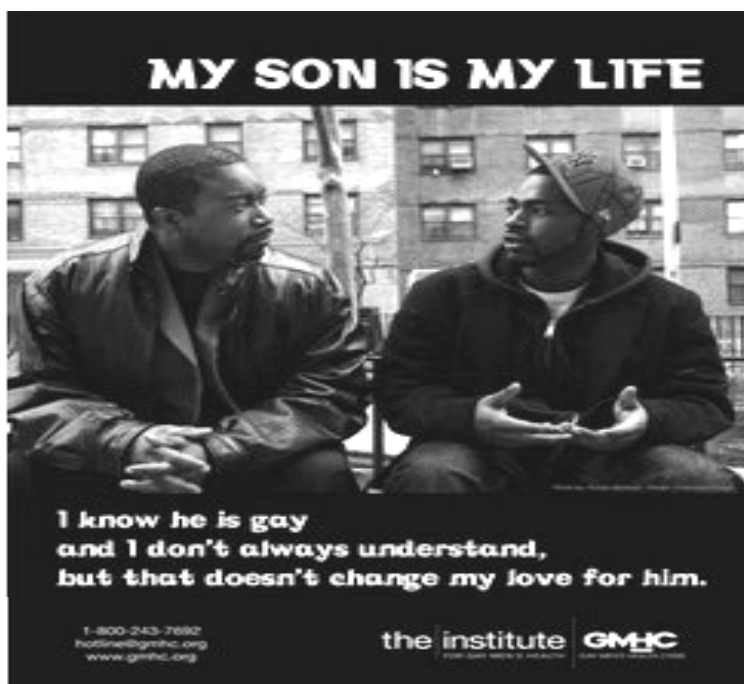
- Brandon C.



### **Pen and Ink**

It's rather a wonder, I think,  
When friends are made through pen and ink,  
A piece of paper, blue and black on white,  
Someone decides that he will write,  
To someone that he has never seen,  
Who lives somewhere he has never been,  
His pen becomes his magic wand,  
Two strangers start to correspond.  
Not strangers long, but soon good friends,  
Just notice how that last letter ends!  
How pleasant their exchange of views,  
Their comments on important news,  
Two friends who live quite far apart,  
Can gladden much each other's heart,  
Can nourish, too, each other's mind,  
With living thoughts in letters kind.  
It's truly beautiful, I think,  
When friendships spring through pen and ink.

C'Leo M. P.







Although Bayard Rustin was one of the most important leaders of the American civil rights movement from the advent of its modern period in the 1950s until well into the 1980s, his name was seldom mentioned; he received comparatively little press or media attention, and others' names were usually much more readily associated with the movement than his was. His was a behind-the-scenes role that, for all its importance, never garnered Rustin the public acclaim he deserved. Rustin's homosexuality and early communist affiliation probably meant that the importance of his contribution to the civil rights and peace movements would never be acknowledged. However, fairness demands that the extent of Rustin's work receive a fair public reception. Bayard Taylor Rustin was born on March 17, 1912, to Florence Rustin, one of eight children of Julia and Janifer Rustin of West Chester, Pennsylvania. Florence's child had been born out of wedlock; the father was Archie Hopkins. Julia and Janifer decided to raise young Bayard as their son, the youngest of the large Rustin family. Julia Rustin had been raised a member of the Society of Friends (Quakers), and even though she attended the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the denomination of her husband, she impressed on the children she raised certain Quaker principles: the equality of all human beings before God, the vital need for nonviolence, the importance of dealing with everyone with love and respect. Rustin was a gifted and successful student in the schools of West Chester, both academically and on his high school track and football teams. It was during this period of his life that Bayard began to demonstrate his gift for singing with a beautiful tenor voice. He attended Wilberforce College. In 1937 he moved to New York City, where he was to live the rest of his life. He enrolled in the City College of New York, although he never received a degree. It was at this time that Rustin began to organize for the Young Communist League of progressive stance on the issue of racial injustice appealed to him, although he began to be disillusioned with them after the Communist Party's abrupt about-face on the issue of segregation in the wake of the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union. He broke with the Young Communist League and soon found himself seeking out A. Philip Randolph, head of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and at that time the leading articulator of the rights of Afro-Americans. He soon headed the youth wing of a march on Washington that Randolph envisioned. Randolph called off the demonstration when President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order No. 8802, forbidding racial discrimination in the employment of workers in defense industries. Randolph's calling off of the projected march caused a temporary breach between him and Bayard Rustin, and Rustin transferred his organizing efforts to the peace movement, first in the Fellowship of Reconciliation and later in the American Friends Service Committee, the Socialist Party, and the War Resisters League.



Although as a member of one of the government-recognized peace churches--he had been a member of the Fifteenth Street Friends Meeting since shortly after moving to New York--he was entitled to do alternative service rather than serve in the armed services, Rustin found himself unable to accept this easy way out, given the fact that many young men who were not members of the recognized peace churches were receiving harsh prison sentences for refusing to serve. In 1944, Rustin was found guilty of violating the Selective Service Act and was sentenced to three years in a federal prison. In March 1944 Rustin was sent to the federal penitentiary in Ashland, Kentucky. He then set about to resist the pervasive segregation then the norm in prisons in the United States. Although faced with vicious racism from some of the prison guards and white prisoners, Rustin faced frequent cruelty with courage and completely nonviolent resistance.

To be continued next month.

**RECAPS (reclaim culture, art, politics, sexuality) is seeking submissions** for the first issue of a new online magazine put together by activist friends of Black & Pink. Looking for art, articles, manifestos, fiction, poetry, erotica, political graphics, etc. Reed will pass on submissions, please send submissions for review to: **RECAPS c/o Reed Miller, 200 Amory St, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130 by February 15th 2012.**



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Art Info Request & Submissions Only  
[This month also RECAPS submissions, see p9]

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200 Amory Street  
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**LEGAL:** Consider writing to Lambda Legal for support or referrals with legal issues that you are having. "Lambda Legal is a national organization committed to achieving full recognition of the civil rights of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender people and those with HIV through impact litigation, education and public policy work."

**Lambda Legal, National Office 120 Wall Street, Suite 1500, New York, NY 10005, 212-809-8585**

Another resource to turn to, if you can afford the subscription (\$24 yearly, payable with new stamps), is Prison Legal News. This resource was co-started by a former gay prisoner and Men Against Sexism organizer, Ed Mead, though now it is run by Paul Wright. You can reach them by writing to:

**Prison Legal News, P.O. Box 2420, West Brattleboro, VT 05303**

**SURVIVORS:** Just Detention International provides support for prisoners who are survivors of sexual abuse. Write them at the legal address below for a packet. Each packet includes an introductory letter, a list of local resources, fact sheets, publications about recovery from sexual abuse, and a letter of hope from another survivor.

**Ms. Chris Daley, Esq., 3325 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 340, Los Angeles, CA 90010**

***A note from Free World B&Pers:***

We are so excited that February 2012 marks 2 years of monthly newsletters, and our mailing list is now over 1200 people! This has only been possible because of everyone's letters and submissions and sharing.

***THANK YOU ALL!***

We are now receiving hundreds of letters each month. There are only a few of us able to read mail at any time, so we are usually a few months behind and working hard to get people added to the newsletter mailing list and the penpal list. We are unable to answer letters personally most of the time. If you write with a specific subject line in your address, for example: "Black & Pink- Religious" or "Black & Pink- Newsletter Submission", we can get it to the right place faster.

But we are mostly unable to answer letters personally at this time.

Thanks for your patience!

